

Message Text

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ACTION AF-10

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H-01 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01

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FM AMEMBASSY NDJAMENA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4797

INFO AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMEMBASSY LAGOS

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AMEMBASSY NIAMEY

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINS, MASS,CD, LY

SUBJECT: PRESIDENT MALLOUM MEETS THE PRESS TO
DISCUSS SECURITY SITUATION

1. BEGIN SUMMARY: DAILY NEWSHEET INFOTCHAD ON
AUGUST 2 PUBLISHED TEXT OF PRESIDENT MALLOUM'S PRESS
CONFERENCE OF PREVIOUS DAY. PRINCIPAL AREA OF INTEREST
WAS TERRITORIAL INTEGRITY OF CHAD AND EXTENT OF LIBYAN
INVOLVEMENT IN REBELLION. PRESIDENT STRONGLY IMPLIED
THAT MERCENARIES, "WHITE OR BLACK", BEING UTILIZED BY
REBELS AND LIBYANS. ASKED WHETHER THE PROMISE OF
AMERICAN ASSISTANCE INDICATED A SHIFT IN CHADIAN
POLITICS, MALLOUM NOTED THAT CHAD HAD RECEIVED ASSISTANCE
FROM USSR BUT WAS NOT ALIGNED TO ANY BLOC. END SUMMARY.

2. SUPREME MILITARY COUNCIL (SMC) PRESIDENT MALLOUM
RESPONDED FORTHRIGHTLY TO NUMEROUS QUESTIONS AUGUST 1,
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CONCENTRATING ON HIS GOVERNMENT'S ATTEMPTS TO DEAL WITH
THE REBELLION IN THE NORTH AND THE TERRITORIAL CLAIMS OF
LIBYA. MALLOUM SET FORTH AT SOME LENGTH THE VARIOUS
OVETURES HE AND THE SMC HAVE MADE TO THE REBELS,
AND MADE CONVINCING CASE THAT LACK OF NEGOTIATIONS
DUE TO RECLACITRANCE OF REBELS RATHER
THAN SMC. MALLOUM SET FORTH HIS VERSION OF SPLIT

BETWEEN REBEL LEADERS GOUKOUNI ANDHABRE LAST FALL, IN ESSENCE ALLEGING THAT HABRE UNWILLING TO ACKNOWLEDGE LIBYAN CLAIMS NORTHERN CHAD WHILE GOUKOUNI WILLING TO COMPROMISE IN EVENTUAL HOPE OF CREATING TOUBOU STATE.

3. REGARDING REPORTS OF US ASSISTANCE, MALLOUM EVADED DIRECT ANSWER AND STATED THAT PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITY OF SMC AND GOVERNMENT WAS TO SECURE INTEGRITY OF THE NATION.HE NOTED THAT CHAD RECEIVING MILITARY ASSISTANCE FOR SOME TWO YEARS FROM USSR AND THAT QUESTION OF WHETHER THIS A VIOLATION OF NON-LIGNED POLICY OF CHADIAN GOVERNMENT DID NOT ARISE THEN AND IS NOT APPLICABLE NOW.

4.MALLOUM DOWNPLAYED ROLE OF NIGER AND NIGERIA AS MEDIATORS, NOTING THAT QUESTION HAD BEEN REFERRED TO OAU COMMISSION IN LIBREVILLE. HE STRONGLY DOUBTED THAT ANY MEDIATOR COULD CONVINCE REBELS OF DESIRABILITY OF NATIONAL RECONCILIATION. WHILE ACKNOWLEDGEING THAT FRONTIER DISPUTE WITH LIBYA AND REBELLION WERE TWO ISSUES, HE EMPHASIZED THAT THEY WERE LINKED TOGETHER.

5. ASKED WHETHER HIS SYMPATHY WITH GOVERNMENTS OF SUDAN AND EGYPT WOULD OCCASION CHAD'S BEING PLACED POLITIALLY AS MEMBER OF THIS "MODERATE" GROUPING, LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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MALLOUM REPLIED THAT IT WAS THE JOURNALISTS WHO TENDED TO GIVE LABELS TO GOVERNMENTS AND LEADERS. WHETHER YOUR NEIGHBOR PLEASES YOU OR NOT, HE ADDED, HE REMAINS YOUR NEIGHBOR.

5. CONFERENE TOUCNED BRIEFLY ON OTHER DMOESTIC AFFAIRS. INTRESTINGLY ENOUGH,MALLOUM STATED HE HAD BEM WITH LEADERS OF OUTLAWED LABOR MOVEMENT AS WELL AS WITH BUSINESS AND OTHER LEASDERS. MALLOUM ALLEGED UNION LEADERS UNWILLING TO COOPERATE UNLESS SUSPNSION LABOR ACTIVITIES LIFTED, WHILE BUSNISS TOO INTERESTED IN MAKING PROFITS TO CONSIDER WELFARE OF COUNTRY.

7. COMMENT: MALLOUM, AS USUAL, WAS REFERSHINGLY FRANK. BUT ALSO, AS USUAL, IT IS DOUBTFUL THAT CAREFULLY STAGED PRESS CONFERENCE WILL HAVE MUCH IMPACT ON EITHER DOMESTIC OR FOREIGN OPINION. NONETHELESS, WITHIN THE CAREFULLY POLITICALLY ATTUNED BUREAUCRACY, THERE IS EVIDENT SATISFACTION THAT THE PRESIDENT HAS STATED PUBLICLY THE LONG HELD POSITIONS OF HIS GOVERNMENT REGARDING LIBYA AND THE REBELS WHICH FOR

TWO YEARS HAVE BEEN MUTED IN HOPES OF EFFECTING SOME
SOR OF COMPROMISE. BRADFORD

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